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UNCLAS ABUJA 001012

SIPDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION: KEVIN SAMPLE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: EAIR ECON NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: OPEN SKIES AGREEMENT IS PENDING IN

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

REF: STATE 73932

EconOff spoke May 7 with Chief Owodu, Technical Assistant to the Minister of Aviation, regarding Nigeria's progress on bringing the bilateral air transport agreement ("Open Skies") into force. According to Chief Owodu, Minister of Aviation Kema Chikwe forwarded the agreement, along with the four conventions and protocols detailed in reftel, to the Federal Executive Council one month ago for approval. The Executive Council, chaired by President Obasanjo, is the equivalent of the U.S. Cabinet. Chief Owodu said he felt certain the entire package of agreements would be approved by the Executive Council soon after President Obasanjo returns from his working visit to Washington. Once the agreement and conventions are approved by the Executive Council, they will be sent to the National Assembly for ratification.

Andrews